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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 000208

STATE FOR INL/LP FOR GRAHAM, BROWN WHA/CAR FOR CADIEUX
SANTO DOMINGO FOR LEGATT QUINLAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/17/2019

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [PREL](#) [JM](#)

SUBJECT: JAMAICA: (C) DESPITE RUMORS TO THE CONTRARY, THERE
SEEMS TO BE NO EVIDENCE OF THE IMMINENT DEPARTURE OF POLICE
COMMISSIONER HARDLEY LEWIN

REF: STATE 19547

Classified By: Charge d'Affairs James T. Heg for reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

11. (C) Summary: When asked by the NAS Director on March 13 if the rumors of his departure were true, Rear Admiral Hardley Lewin, current Commissioner of Police just laughed. While nothing is beyond the realm of possibility, Lewin's response seems to confirm the learned opinions of the current Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of National Security, Richard Reese, and the former Minister of National Security, Peter Phillips, who believe that: although PM Golding may be impatient at the slow pace of reform within the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF); and, despite the fact that JCF officers are still agitating for Lewin's removal; for the moment there is no evidence to support the rumors of Lewin's imminent retirement as Commissioner of Police. (Reftel)

12. (C) On March 12, NAS Director met with Richard Reese, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of National Security to discuss Lewin's rumored departure. In addition to reporting from other channels (Reftel), the NAS Director had also heard directly from two senior police officers about Lewin's departure, said to be as early as March 30. Reese acknowledged that the Prime Minister was concerned by the lack of apparent progress towards implementation of the recommended reforms outlined in the recent JCF Strategic Review. Reese also commented that there continued to be pressure by police officers who are known ruling Jamaica Labor Party supporters to remove Lewin and appoint another JLP loyalist, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Owen Ellington as Commissioner. Reese stated that these officers have made it clear that they were upset because they believed that Lewin had been blocking their "political" promotions. Reese opined that much of the international support that the JCF was currently receiving hinged upon having a strong, incorruptible leader like Lewin at the helm. The NAS Director confirmed that Reese's impressions were true.

13. (C) In addition to the denial of promotions based on political stripe, under Lewin's direction, in February, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police completed their polygraph review of senior JCF officers. It is likely that some of the officers who either objected to taking the exam, and/or those who failed, are also pushing for Lewin's ouster. The first group of ten candidates was tested in late 2008, and as anticipated, nine passed. One of the surprise pass results was ACP Ellington, about whom there previously had been suspicion of police corruption. When the second group was examined, in February 2009, it was anticipated that there would be a much higher failure rate. Of the 48 officers requested to take the exam in February, only 40 consented (DCP Charles Scarlet, former head of the JCF National Intelligence Bureau was one of the refusals. It was anticipated that if he had taken the

exam, he would have failed). When it came time for the second round, only 38 of the 40 showed. Of that group, only 17 passed.

¶4. (C) According to the Chief RCMP Liaison in Kingston, the exams were extremely thorough and were a combination of both a standard lifestyle polygraph along with a forensic examination where it was suspected that crimes had been committed. The average exam length was six to nine hours and revealed telling cultural anomalies among some officers, who admitted to extra-judicial killings, but truly believed that their actions were "justice." In the past Lewin had indicated that for all who failed the Canadian vetting, he would sit them down, and lay out the JCF's entire file against them and give them the opportunity to make a choice, become a police officer and uphold the law, or leave the force. The RCMP is unsure what Lewin intends to do with the results, whether he will give all officers who failed a chance, or whether he will draw bright lines against those who have committed significant crimes, such as extra-judicial killings.

¶5. (C) On March 13, the Chargi met with Peter Phillips, former Minister of National Security and member of the opposition People's National Party. Phillips indicated that he had no intention of crossing the aisle, although he had been asked. In Phillips' view, both Lewin and Minister of National Security, Col. Trevor MacMillan, about whom there have also been departure rumors, are more, not less secure in their jobs than they were a few months ago. By Phillips' calculation, Prime Minister Golding needs them to stay where they are to continue the effort to reform the JCF. To the previously enumerated list of persons who would like to see Lewin go, Phillips stated that we needed to add the last two Commissioners of Police, Francis Forbes, and Lucius Thomas. Phillips informed the Chargi that both Thomas and Forbes are actively working to sabotage Lewin's efforts to reform the JCF.

¶6. (C) Due to his failed leadership challenge of the PNP President, Portia Simpson Miller, Phillips has been regulated to the PNP back benches. Although no longer a PNP insider, Phillips still wields some influence and he told the Chargi that he had been instrumental recently in keeping a long-standing member of the Police Service's Commission, Oliver Clark, on the Commission. In January when Prime Minister Golding submitted his recommended list of appointees for the Commission Clark's name was noticeably absent. In the past, Clark has been a very active and effective member of the Commission and his retention, announced in February, was welcome news.

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